(b) whether any agreement was reached as a result thereof for adoption of ways and means to prevent the smuggling and circulation of counterfeit currency and for joint efforts and co-operation to fight out the menace; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard and steps taken and being taken in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) As part of the Indo-US Economic Cooperation, a delegation of Indian officials visited USA during the third week of June, 05 for holding talks with their counterparts on mutual cooperation in the area of printing, anti-counterfeiting of currency notes, R&D etc.

The talks concentrated on areas of cooperation in designing of security features, detection/prevention of counterfeiting, exchange of information and intelligence on counterfeiting, training programmes for the law enforcement/security agencies forensic and R&D aspects, etc. The current Indo US dialogue will continue for mutual benefit of both the countries.

Price of mineral water

†2250. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether water is costlier than milk in the name of mineral water, due to which common man cannot buy mineral water;

(b) whether Government agree that getting clean drinking water is the fundamental right of each and every citizen of the country and to make it available;

(c) whether mineral water available in bottles or containers in the market is free from all types of pollution and completely safe for the health;

(d) whether Government feel that after exempting the mineral water from all the duties, its price should be fixed in such a way that every common man can use it; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of House.

Caution against volatility of share market

2251. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a recent public interview he is said to have cautioned people about the volatility of the share market;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons thereof; and

(c) whether he is reported to have also observed that he would be concerned if sensex crossed the 8000 point limit and if so, the implication thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) The Finance Minister has in recent interviews expressed his view that the market reflects the current potential of the economy and hoped that stakeholders in the market would respond in a measured manner and not show undue exubearance or unwarranted despondency. While stating that he might be concerned if the sensex crossed 8000 at the current potential of the economy, he said that if growth rate increased, there was no reason why the market should not do even better.

Assistance booth for tax payers

†2252. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up an assistance booth for providing all the facilities at a single window to major tax payers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) In the Budget Speech for 2005-06, the Finance Minister had announced the proposal to establish

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.